

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-13 DHA-02  
ACDA-07 /098 W

-----141922Z 065427 /14

R 131100Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2218  
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 2544

E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, AF, UR, CH  
SUBJECT: DAOUD'S AFGHANISTAN AND HIS TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION

1. SUMMARY. DAOUD IS NOT "IN POLITICAL TROUBLE," BUT THE COUNTRY HE LEFT APRIL 12 FOR HIS THREE DAY VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT QUITE THE SETTLED ENTITY HE RULED BEFORE THE "LOYA JIRGAH" (CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY), THE PASSAGE OF A NEW CONSTITUTION EARLIER THIS YEAR AND THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW CABINET. AS FOR THE VISIT ITSELF WE CREDIT AFGHAN PROTESTATIONS THAT IT IS "ROUTINE" -- THOUGH THE INTENSITY OF AFGHAN-SOVIET RELATIONS AND RECENT POLITICAL EVENTS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD WILL OFFER PLENTY TO TALK ABOUT. AS SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME A REGULAR EVENT IN AFGHAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS, A CHINESE DELEGATION TURNED UP IN KABUL JUST IN TIME TO OFFER COUNTERPOINT TO THE LARGER THEME. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT DAOUD LEFT FOR MOSCOW APRIL 12, ALONG WITH HIS  
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MINISTER OF COMMERCE (JALALAR), MINISTER FOR PLANNING (KHURRAMJDR  
MINISTER OF WATER AND POWER (MOHAMMADI), MINISTER IN CHARGE FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS (WAHEED ABDULLAH), AND A LOWER RANKING STAFF  
THAT INCLUDED SAMAD GHAUS (THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DEPUTY FOR  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS -- DEFACTO DEPUTY MINISTER).

3. THE SCENE AT HOME. THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE DAOUD LEFT

BEHIND WAS LESS TRANQUIL, LESS SETTLED THAN DAOUD HAS EXPERIENCED FOR SOME TIME. DISCONTENT ABOUT THE CABINET ANNOUNCED MARCH 17 (SEE KABUL 1921) HAS BROKEN OUT IN THE AFGHAN "ESTABLISHMENT" -- AND IN LESS PRESTIGIOUS STRATA, WE BELIEVE, AS WELL. ONE INFLUENTIAL MOHAMMADZAI COUSIN, SULTAN MAHMOUD GHAZI, HAS NOT BOTHERED TO MUTE HIS DISAFFECTION, NURTURED BY HIS DISCONTENT WITH DAOUD'S CLOSEST ASSOCIATES. (SEE KABUL 2530).

4. FURTHER, DAOUD WAS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO APPOINT SOMEONE TO FILL THE CONSTITUTIONALLY REQUIRED ROLE OF VICE PRESIDENT, SINCE THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION PARTY FROM WHICH THIS OFFICIAL (OR "THESE OFFICIALS," FOR DAOUD MAY APPOINT SEVERAL VICE PRESIDENTS) IS CONSTITUTIONALLY TO BE DRAWN HAS NOT ITSELF TAKEN SHAPE AND BEEN "PROCLAIMED". (DE FACTO FOREIGN MINISTER WAHEED ABDULLAH TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT DURING DAOUD'S ABSENCE THE NATION'S AFFAIRS WOULD BE IN THE HANDS OF A "COLLEGIUM" -MEMBERS UNSPECIFIED.) IN A PRESS CONFERENCE (SEPTTEL) GIVEN ON THE EVE OF THE DEPARTURE DAOUD IN FACT ADMITTED THAT PARTY FORMATION HAD GONE SOUR -- THAT, MOMENTARILY, THE PARTY HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY "A NUMBER OF OPPORTUNISTS --" A NUMBER OF "SABOTEURS" WORKING "ON THEIR OWN WILL". FROM SOME QUARTERS CAME HINTS ALSO OF A BREAKING SCANDAL POSSIBLY INVOLVING MISTREATMENT -- UNBETTER KNOWN TO DAOUD, IT IS SAID -- OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. (THE FACTS OF THIS ARE MURKY AND ARE NOT YET TO BE BELIEVED -- AND CERTAINLY ARE NOT TO BE MENTIONED TO AFGHANS. WE MENTION THE MATTER HERE AS ALLEGATIONS LIKELY TO AFFECT THE REGIME, TRUE OR NOT.)

5. PERHAPS ALL THIS IS BUT AN INEVITABLE MOMENT OF DISCONTENT  
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FOLLOWING THE HIGH HOPES ENGENDERED BY THE LOYA JIRGAH (KABUL 1188), THE NEW CONSTITUTION (KABUL 1379) AND THE MARCH 21 NEW AFGHAN CALENDAR YEAR. BUT THESE NEGATIVE SIGNALS MAY PROVE LATER TO HAVE HAD DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE.

6. THE EXTERNAL SCENE. ASIDE FROM UNPLEASANTNESS WITH IRAN (KABUL 2495), AFGHANISTAN'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS ARE GOOD -- INCLUDING WITH THE SOVIET UNION. A RUSSIAN BOUQUET TO DAOUD APPEARED JUST PRIOR TO THE VISIT IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY'S "NEWS BULLETIN" OF APRIL 9, ASSURING AFGHANS THAT "OUR IDEALS ... DIFFER FROM YOURS (BUT WE INTERFERE NEITHER IN YOUR DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, NOR DO WE INTERFERE IN THE INDEPENDENT ACTIONS OF YOUR PEOPLE. WE SUPPORT ANY PHENOMENON THAT PLAYS A PROGRESSIVE ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR PEOPLE".

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 2544

7. OFFICIALS HERE IN "CHARACTERIZING" THE DAOUD VISIT TO MOSCOW HAVE KEPT THE "CORRECT" (CARDS HELD CLOSE TO THE VEST) STANCE THEY USUALLY TAKE WITH US WHEN AFGHAN-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED. THEY HAVE, IN FACT, TOLD NOTHING TO US (OR TO ANYONE, WE BELIEVE) ABOUT THE VISIT. IN HIS APRIL 11 PRESS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT DAOUD PRESENTED THE TRIP AS NO MORE THAN A FOLLOW-ON TO PRESIDENT PODGORNÝ'S VISIT TO KABUL IN DECEMBER OF 1975, JUST ANOTHER "LEADERS OF TWO COUNTRIES ... STRENGTHENING AND CONSOLIDATING TIES" KIND OF THING. THIS MAY BE DISINGENUOUS, BUT IT MAY ALSO BE THE FINAL TRUTH. THE MERE VOLUME OF AFGHAN-RUSSIAN TRANSACTIONS IN AID AND TRADE WOULD SEEM TO FILL ANY "WORKING AGENDA," AN EXPECTATION CONFIRMED BY DAOUD'S HAVING TAKEN THREE CABINET MINISTERS FROM THE TRADE/ECONOMICS/DEVELOPMENT FIELD. ENOUGH HAS HAPPENED IN SOUTH ASIA RECENTLY -- THINGS LIKE THE INDIAN ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICAL SIEGE AGAINST GHUTTO -- TO GIVE PLENTY OF FOOD FOR CONVERSATION DURING TIME THAT REMAINS.

8. WITH A REGULARITY THAT RULES OUT MERE COINCIDENCE A "CHINESE CONNECTION" APPEARED ON THE EVE OF DAOUD'S DEPARTURE, THIS  
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TIME IN THE FORM OF MR. CHAI SHU FAN, VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN TRADE, WHO ARRIVED IN KABUL APRIL 9. THESE CHINESE DIVERSIONS HAVE BECOME A REGULAR EVENT WHEN AFGHAN-SOVIET RELATIONS COULD BECOME A NEWS MEDIA PREOCCUPATION. WE ARE NOT CERTAIN HOW THESE DIVERSIONARY

EVENTS GET PLANNED, THOUGH THEIR TAKING PLACE CLEARLY COINCIDES  
WITH BOTH AFGHAN AND CHINESE INTENTIONS.

9. AMBASSADOR SAW WAHEED ABDULLAH APRIL 10 AND BRIEFED HIM ON  
U.S. SALT PROPOSALS PRESENTED BY THE SECRETARY WHEN HE VISITED  
MOSCOW.  
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